

Message Text

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51

ACTION AGR-10

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 ISO-00 AID-05 EB-07 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 (ISO) W

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R 311131Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9397

INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

UNCLAS ISLAMABAD 2713

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, EAID, ENRG, PK

SUBJ: PROSPECTS FOR PAKISTAN'S WHEAT CROP

REF: ISLAMABAD 2206

1. SUMMARY. RECENT WIDESPREAD RAINS RESULTED IN ONLY NEGLIGIBLE STORM AND HAIL DAMAGE TO WHEAT CROP AND, ON BALANCE, WERE BENEFICIAL. CROP PROSPECTS BASICALLY UNCHANGED FROM SITUATION AS OF THREE WEEKS AGO AS REPORTED REFTEL. HOWEVER, PROSPECTS SLIGHTLY BETTER THAN REPORTED REFTEL BECAUSE OF CONTINUED FAVORABLE WEATHER AND BECAUSE OF SLIGHT UPWARD REVISION OF ACREAGE PLANTED IN IMPORTANT PUNJAB PROVINCE..OFFICIAL ESTIMATES NOW TOTAL 7.1 MILLION TONS AS COMPARED WITH 7.5 MILLION TONS FOR PREVIOUS YEAR. CONTINUATION OF PRESENT IDEAL WEATHER IN SHORT TIME REMAINING BEFORE HARVEST COULD RAISE ESTIMATES SLIGHTLY. END SUMMARY.

2. AT EMBASSY'S REQUEST, CONSULATES HAVE FURNISHED LATEST INFORMATION AS TO PROSPECTS FOR IMPORTANT WHEAT CROP. ALL REPORTED THAT RECENT WIDESPREAD RAINS CAUSED ONLY NEGLIGIBLE STORM AND HAIL DAMAGE. ON BALANCE, THEY WERE BENEFICIAL.

3. CONGEN LAHORE REPORTS THAT PROVINCIAL OFFICIALS HAVE UNCLASSIFIED

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INCREASED ESTIMATE OF ACREAGE PLANTED FROM 10.49 MILLION

ACRES TO 10.6 MILLION, ONLY ABOUT THREE PERCENT BELOW
LAST YEAR'S RECORD OF 10.9 MILLION ACRES. PROVINCIAL
OFFICIALS NOW ESTIMATE THAT PUNJAB WHEAT CROP WILL BE
5.5 MILLION TONS, AS COMPARED WITH 5.6 MILLION TONS
PREVIOUS YEAR. PREVIOUSLY (SEE REFTEL) PROVINCIAL OFFICIALS
ESTIMATED ONLY 5.2 MILLION TONS FOR CURRENT YEAR.

4. CON GEN KARACHI REPORTS ONLY MARGINAL STORM DAMAGE
IN THEIR DISTRICT AND NO CHANGE FROM ESTIMATE (900,000)
REPORTED REFTEL.

5. NO CHANGE OF 100,000 TON ESTIMATE FOR BALUCHISTAN.

6. CON GEN PESHAWAR REPORTS THAT THOUGH RECENT RAINS
WERE NOT REALLY NEEDED THEY DID NOT CAUSE ANY DAMAGE TO
WHEAT CROP -- NO BLACK RUST, NO TOPPLING OF STANDING GRAIN --
AND, ON BALANCE, ADDED INSURANCE THAT WHEAT CROP WOULD
BE A GOOD ONE.

7. OFFICIAL ESTIMATES NOW TOTAL 7.1 MILLION TONS BUT
CONTINUATION OF IDEAL WEATHER DURING SHORT TIME REMAINING
BEFORE HARVEST COULD RAISE ESTIMATES SLIGHTLY.
BYROADE

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